



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

EVENING AMUSEMENTS.

Mr. President—"An evening party is (I apprehend,) an assembly of the cheerful of both sexes, met together for the purpose of amusing and being amused;" (I am greatly addicted to leading off with a definition,) and consequently each human particle of the enviable crowd must return home delighted that he has been well entertained, and satisfied that he contributed his due proportion towards the aggregate pleasure of the ball-room. This doubtless is ever the case with 199,999 of those choice spirits, who are surrounded by the *cordon sanitaire* of the circular road, and deluged with invitations; but the individual who completes the number of our citizens, as per census, is unhappily an exception to this general rule of reciprocal felicity, since he can hardly recollect experiencing any addition to the sum of happiness with which he entered a *soirée*, and which is in it always sure to be selfishly hoarded.

This may appear inexcusable when we consider the free trade in amusements that is at present encouraged, and the varied forms that the Proteus of pleasure assumes to win his votaries; so that he who is but the owner of hands that can hold a card, legs to quadrille it, or a tongue to make the amiable withal, need only cast his stock of capabilities into the common fund, to be enabled and entitled to receive thereout an ample dividend of gratification: but alas! gravity (call it not stupidity,) and diffidence, are sad obstacles to playing with success, dancing with spirit, or chattering with freedom; and they are obstacles that I have had to contend with, in all their plenitude of evil influence. More than once have I sat down heroically to a card-table, determined to lose with invincible good humour, and to rise, when not worth a doit, with a frame of mind as placid as that of the angelically tempered being, commonly called the winner; but a continued run of bad fortune and bad play, has always proved too strong for my resolution, and often for my partner's politeness; and I soon discovered that I was set down as an ill-tempered blunderer, to whom it was vexatious to be opposed, and with whom it was ruinous to be united. I therefore prudently cut the cards altogether, and walked over to the dancers, resolving by a vigorous concentration of ideas on the various figures, to go through them as safely as the martyrs of old trod the mazes of red hot plough-shares. This appeared feasible enough while the first set remained in motion, (for I always prudently occupied the *cross* benches to show my independence,) but no sooner did it come to my turn to enter on my probationary course of skips and gyrations, than my unlucky gravity was sure to create as much confusion as that with which Sir Isaac Newton has threatened the dance of planets, and draw madly from their proper spheres numbers of fair shooting stars, into most admired disorder. My blunders, though apparently witnessed with a good-humoured laugh, occasioned, I could perceive, much internal bitterness of spirit; and made me look on the unskilful legs that discomposed so many others, with as much shame and sorrow that they were mine, as I had once experienced in avowing the proprietorship of two terriers that had been committing sad havoc on exotics in a green-house. I now felt, that as far as amusements were concerned, my arms and legs were virtually amputated; and the trunk that remained not being so lithe, nor under such adroit management as that of the elephant, I was compelled to renounce all hopes of becoming an actor in the business of pleasure, and

content myself with settling down into a silent spectator of what passed before me. I was already convinced, by repeated failures, that any attempts at conversation would inevitably prove fruitless; I could indeed imagine that two persons meeting in the street, might support an animated dialogue for a long hour by the post-office clock, on health and weather, and delight each other with pleasing reminiscences of last week's rain and this day's sunshine, and profound anticipations of what might be in the clouds for the next; but these subjects have been cruelly banished the ball-room; and in what manner an original idea could be started on any other text, is quite above the reach of my limited comprehension. I therefore thought it advisable to back out of the gay crowd, until the wall put an end to my retrogressions; and there I have ever since been so constantly stationed, that I now meet with as little notice as if I were one of those swarthy mutes of Egyptian form divine, that have been introduced by some freak of taste in the assemblies of the fair and cheerful, where

"Each in his cold hand holds a light."

This position that I have taken up, is particularly favourable to one inclined to remark upon the sayings and doings that come within shot-range of his ears and optics; and I have experienced great consolation in witnessing an ebullition of bad temper from a loo party, an awkward movement among the quadrillers, or a dead silence amid the lovers of colloquy: yet how I envy the talent of those eternal talkers! what creative fancies must be possessed by beings who can thus compose extempore sentences ad infinitum, and throw out each pointed idea with a force that makes it stick like an arrow in the memory. I this moment see vividly before me an enviable pair that I last night watched for full two hours, and whose powers of converse appeared almost superhuman. A lovely "form of life and light," had retired from the revolving waltzers, and was listlessly viewing those who still spun on their giddy rounds, when an animal, "with limb of lath and kerchief'd chin," sat down beside her, and without the least premeditation produced a remark that must have been vastly intellectual, for it was listened to with that joyful brightening of the visage, that always betokens a favourable reception to a thought; immediately a brilliant reply was supplied by the fair improvisatrice, which was of course hailed by the beau with bow and smile, and the response, "as ready as a borrower's cap," instantly succeeded. After some time the fire seemed to slacken on both sides, and I had the satisfaction of seeing my gentleman fairly at a loss; however, it was but a treacherous calm, for he merely sent his eyes for a moment round the room, as if in quest of a stray sentiment, his face still wearing the smile that the last effusion was received with, when he suddenly turned his head, pregnant with a flash, on his fair companion, and the impromptus went on with renewed spirit and vigour. To me, at the time, it appeared infinitely easier 'to drink up Easel, or to eat a crocodile,' than to imitate their volubility; and as the mind is marvellously prone to account for its deficiencies by blaming some external cause, I could not avoid execrating the state of society that allowed Harpocrates to be worshipped in a temple of talk, and compelled an individual to remain immured in the sarcophagus of a remote corner, silent as a mummy, and "grinning in the dark" at the pomps and vanities of the gay world, from which he felt himself secluded.

Often have I sighed for the time when the influence of some reformer of socialities, should be exerted to break down the banks of

reserve and formality, by which the stream of conversation has so long been narrowed, and thus allow one to expatiate freely over the visible creation. A gallopade has been invented to counteract the effects of sombre movements on the organs of saltation, and the world gratefully owns how well it has succeeded; something equally charitable might doubtless be done for the organs of speech, by allowing them to gallop through all forms, with no other requisites than good lungs and gaiety, leaving dances and dialogues, that require study and memory, to the dull followers of stupid custom. In furtherance of this benevolent object, I have ventured to draw up the following maxims, the observance of which may assist in transforming mutes into articulating mortals, the essential attribute of humanity, and in converting the straggling whispers of a drawing-room, into one harmonious hum of blended voices, delightful as that which salutes the ear in the hall of the four-courts; and if they should be so fortunate as to emancipate a single tongue, or release one individual from the irksomeness of being alone in a crowd, I shall be amply repaid for the ink and labour that have been expended upon them.

MAXIM 1.—Never speak to a person on a subject which his profession should make him acquainted with: we Irish are always remarkably sententious in discussing any thing that savours of business, which is a theme that should be carefully forgotten.

2.—When a proposition is advanced, always meet it with a contradiction: acquiescence is only holding a blanket up to the ball of conversation, which makes it instantly drop; opposition on the other hand compels it to rebound, and thus tends to keep it constantly going.

3.—If you are so fortunate as to know any person whose affairs have become desperate, be sure to express to his most intimate friends your surprise that a man so diligent and clever as he was should not have met with better fortune. Depend upon it that the detail of errors by which they can account for his failure, will afford a copious supply of loquacity.

4.—Never be the first to start a subject: if you attempt to take the lead, it is probable that others may become restive, and refuse to go on; but allow them to choose their own path, and you can follow without the least danger of a silence.

5.—Always bear in mind that the most effectual way to check verbosity, is to extol some absent person extravagantly: people are wonderfully cautious of bestowing praise, and prudently refuse to join in a commendation.

6.—Be sure to charge your memory with a proper supply of repartees, bon-mots, and jests; as for facts you may trust to fancy; for instance, you may overturn a gig in your imagination, and describe the accidents therefrom arising; some other person, unwilling to be excelled, will break down a carriage, and thus an amusing series of casualties will go round the delighted circle in sketches which possess all the superior smoothness, point, and delicacy of fiction over dull reality.

This advice, here freely offered to society, is the only mite that I can afford to contribute; but let every one come forward with his modicum of exertion in the cause, and there is little doubt but a noise in the world would soon be the result. Meantime, I shall consider myself rich in one of the two requisites for confabulation, being an excellent listener, and if any person, by sending his eyes round the walls that enclose an evening crowd, should discover that

I am not what I am generally supposed to be, a piece of furniture, and should he be generous enough in consequence, to bestow all his tediousness upon me, he may rest assured that he will be heard with a patience, that the reader of this paper, short as it is, will I greatly fear be unable to imitate.

S. S. R.

Most puissant President—Among the many calamities which must often require your condolence, there is one to which many worthy matrons and blooming belles of my acquaintance are particularly exposed—namely, a scarcity of beaux at their parties. The ladies—heaven bless them! generally muster pretty strong; but gentlemen almost invariably are scarce: nay, they are even become such rarities, that I have sometimes seen a whole line of ladies seated in a ball-room, looking “like innocent flowers,” without a single unit of male humanity to take pity on their forlorn disconsolate state. Bachelors are, of course, in great demand; and invitations, thick as the arrowy sleet of winter, are showered upon them. On some occasions indeed the efforts made to procure the necessary supply, almost surpass belief; and I am certain that if beaux could be transferred from hand to hand like other irrational animals, the holders of such stock might sell at a handsome premium.

Being myself a philanthropic person, and deeply sensible of the prevalent calamity which hath increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished, I have after much mental labour excogitated a plan by which I trust much may be effected towards this desirable end. I propose then, sir, as soon as a sufficient number of subscribers has been obtained, to open “a seminary” with “a large and extensive assortment,” as the advertisements have it, of young bipeds from twenty to thirty years of age, selected by myself both here and in foreign parts, on “the most improved principles and favourable terms:” they will be divided into six classes—namely, sticks, dancers, chatters, sentimentalists, smilers, and factotums, and shall be regularly supplied with black silk handkerchiefs, silk and marseilles vests, pumps, silk stockings, kid gloves, and all the other paraphernalia of breeched fashionables. These bipeds I intend to let out by the night, at so much a head, increasing the charge as the class rises in its acquirements. It will, therefore, be obvious that any lady can at any time have a complete collection of bachelors of the very kind required to “make up” her party, and thus avoid all mental anxiety, and the expenditure of many reams of tinted note papers.

I shall now mention as briefly as possible, the qualifications of the various classes. The title for the first, the “STICKS,” was suggested by the declaration of Bob Acres, that he had been accounted a good *stick* in a country dance. I intend that my “nice young men” shall be able to walk through a quadrille “with lofty and becoming gravity,” as the worthy fra Antonio Agapida happily expresses it, and shall strut through a suite of apartments almost like rational beings, occasionally passing their fingers through the perfumed curls by which their pericraniums are surmounted.

The DANCERS will be qualified to join in the lancer set of quadrilles, the gallopades, the gentle undulations of the waltz, and even in the mazurka, if required: they must not, however, be expected to talk, as that is the distinguishing trait of the third class—the CHATTERS.

All included in this division will be able to speak fluently on the weather, as being charming, delightful, beautiful—or melancholy, dismal, and shocking: they will remark that Sir Walter Scott's last novel is not equal to *Waverley*—that the *National Magazine* is a charming work, and a credit to Ireland—that Moore's *Life of Byron* is "interesting"—that Liston is great in *Paul Pry*, and Macready entertaining in *Hamlet*. They will have positive orders never to differ from a lady in opinion.

N.B.—A few of the chatters shall be taught to escort ladies in the forenoon, either to the Botanic Gardens or the Society House. In the former case, they will be able to distinguish a carnation from a tulip, and a heath from a gilliflower; and they will in all cases assume the air of a cavalier servente, and compare their fair companion to a rose. Only think of the delight some vinegar-visaged vestal would experience, when likened to the monthly rose, beautiful in all seasons—or imagine some widow "fat, fair, and forty," flinging her "listless length" upon some groaning bench, and staring with mingled pleasure and surprise when her escort compares her matured charms to those of the full-blown cabbage rose, or the greater blossoms of the peony. In the museum, the chatter shall deport himself like a scientific amateur, repeat with our friend Bottom, "there is not a more fearful wild fowl than your lion," and remark with oracular gravity, that "shell-fish are not usually classed with the mammalia."

The *Sentimentalists* are particularly recommended as partners either in the ball-room, or at the supper-table, to all young ladies who have "just come out:" they will quote Moore's *Melodies*—sympathize on the fading of a flower, or the death of a canary, by remarking that "all that's bright must fade;" shed tears on all proper occasions, "babble o' green fields," and will vote the grand afterpiece of *Mother Goose* insupportable because it wants sentiment: they will also be enchanted with the *Improvisatrice*, and each will profess himself a "man of feeling."

The *Smilers* will all be sweet-faced men, and are on every occasion to look monstrous happy, and to admire everything in or about the house in which they happen to be: they will be gifted with a most plentiful lack of wit—will compliment the young ladies of the house on their singing—be enraptured with their drawings, and never mistake what the drawing is intended for: they will be ready to laugh at everything intended for wit by the host or hostess, as soon as the proper signal is given for cachinnation.

The *FACTOTUMS* are, however, the class, on the institution of which my hopes of being remembered with "my land's language," are imperishably founded: they shall be able to snuff a candle without putting it out above once in five times—to hand a glass of lemonade without spilling the liquid sour down their partner's back—to dandle an infant without braining "such a love;" and even to shawl a lady upon an emergency. Many of this class shall have travelled, and shall "disfigure their speech with strange phrases." As every body has run over France and Italy, travellers to these countries would now be commonplace: mine shall consist of such as have eaten blubber with the Esquimaux, or clay with the Otomacs—lime with the Guajinoes, or white ants with the Hottentots—or of those who have explored the pyramids, or visited the North Pole, or Timbuctoo, or the celestial city: they shall be ready to go on the slightest errand to the antipodes—nay, "to fetch a hair off the great Cham's beard," if desired. It will

be obvious that some of the Factotums will thus be eminently qualified to "come in place as a lion" at tea-parties, and when necessary to "roar you an 'twere any nightingale."

This, Mr. Editor, is a mere outline of my capacious plan. In an age like the present, when "springes to catch woodcocks" are daily crowded with game, I feel confident that a proposal which embraces objects so philanthropic, and individuals so meritorious, as mine, will not remain unappreciated or unrewarded.

P.

Belfast.

REVIEW OF THE WORKS OF THE LATE RICHARD KIRWAN, ESQ.
PRES. R.I.A.—BY JOHN O'REARDON, ESQ. M.D.

(Concluded from last number.)

The first of Mr. Kirwan's essays on meteorology, entitled an "Estimate of the Temperature of different Latitudes," commences with an inquiry into the causes of heat and cold; and with an examination of the influence of the winds, and of evaporation, on the temperature of the atmosphere. The author afterwards combats the opinion of those who suppose that there is a focus of heat in the centre of our globe. We know, however, that some learned geologists still maintain that the central part of the globe forms an immense furnace, or a mass of ignited and melted minerals, which every where struggling for vent, bursts forth wherever there is the least resistance, and produces volcanic eruptions in numerous parts of the world. There are at all events circumstances which induce us to consider it probable, that some very distant volcanos communicate interiorly, or at least alternate in their eruptions with each other.

Mr. Kirwan gives tables of his own construction relative to the mean annual temperature in all latitudes, and accompanies them with judicious remarks. He treats in another chapter of the mean temperature of the months. "Experience," he says, "ascertains that the mean temperature of the month of April nearly constitutes the mean annual temperature, and it is evident, that in as much as the heat may be considered to depend on the influence of the solar rays—the mean temperature of each month should be as the altitude of the sun, or as the sinus of its altitude." The author calculates, according to these principles, the mean heat of the months in each latitude; and at the same time he rectifies his calculations by noticing the influence of the terrestrial heat, which augments the temperature of the last months of summer, and also of the effects of evaporation.

In the third chapter he discusses the differences of the temperatures of the air, earth and water, as likewise their respective capacities for receiving and communicating heat. He observes that with respect to the earth, the matter of heat descends slowly, and is restored to the atmosphere during winter. "It is," says our author, "owing to these causes that at a certain depth from the surface of the earth, as for instance that of 80 or 90 feet, the temperature of the earth varies very little, and in general approaches nearly to the mean annual temperature." Thus the temperature of fountains differs in no degree from the mean temperature of the air, and it experiences only the slightest